

76-7179/5

May 3, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT : Meeting with Center for
Defense Information, 11:00-
12:30, 23 April 1976

PARTICIPANTS : Edward W. Proctor, DDI
[redacted] OA/DCI

STATINTL

Mr. Proctor opened the briefing by reiterating the ground rules, i.e., no notes, no recorders, no attribution, and no further dissemination of the information. He also said that there would be three instances in which he would not answer question: if he did not know the answer; if the answer would involve classified materials or intelligence sources and methods; or if the subject matter concerned the U. S. defense budget. As requested by the visitors, Mr. Proctor then gave a short, prepared statement on the general nature of intelligence and the Agency's responsibilities for producing finished intelligence for national foreign policymakers.

Questions fell largely into three or four general categories: covert action; the kinds and worth of various types of information; intelligence failures; and oversight of the Agency.

Covert action was the subject of most discussion. Mr. Proctor defined covert action, indicated the procedures for initiating and approving covert action proposals, and stressed that such actions represented only a very small part of the Agency's activities. No specific covert actions nor specific countries were discussed. Discussion instead focused on philosophy and morality. Many in the group, particularly Mr. Stewart Mott, returned repeatedly to the morality of covert action. (Despite the lucidity of his arguments, Mr. Proctor probably did not succeed in converting Mr. Mott into a supporter of covert action.)

Mr. Proctor repeatedly stressed the selectivity used in assessing and approving covert action proposals. He noted that it was part of his responsibility as the DDI to review covert action proposals for feasibility, appropriateness, and long-term implications. He said that his review could cause proposals to be significantly altered or cancelled entirely. He said that the Agency never undertakes covert actions on its own authority. Proposals for covert action can come from several sources, for example,

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from the National Security Council, the Department of State, the Ambassador in the country involved, or from the Agency itself. Mr. Proctor noted that the Agency does not play a role in determining U.S. Policy or goals abroad. It implements covert action plans when such plans are approved and certified by the President. Mr. Proctor also said that six separate Congressional Committees are briefed on covert action plans that have been approved.

Mr. Proctor was asked whether he felt confident that the new Executive Order would keep the Agency from responding to illegal or inappropriate orders from the President. Mr. Proctor said he was certain this would be the case and that, indeed, sensitivity was now so high that he was positive that nothing remotely questionable or improper would be considered at all. The questioner also asked Mr. Proctor whether he felt the Executive Order would permit the Agency to continue to engage in "interference" i.e., covert action, abroad. Mr. Proctor said that was the case, and in response to a second question, he cited the relevant portion of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, and its legislative history. These make it clear that Congress intended the Agency to engage in covert action programs.

Several in the group were interested in the value of various kinds of sources. Several seemed to regard clandestinely acquired information as of little worth in relationship to the risk involved. Mr. Proctor explained that there are three general categories of information: that which is acquired overtly from open literature or normal diplomatic processes; that which is gathered by technical means; and that which is acquired clandestinely. He related this to the three kinds of societies that the United States deals with abroad: open societies where most information can be obtained overtly; closed societies where all types of collection must be used; and "Third World" countries where information often is not generally available nor generally reliable. Few of the latter countries are of significance to U.S. foreign policy interests. If they should be, then the most appropriate and safest means would be used to gather information.

Mr. Proctor said that clandestine collection is never used unless there is no other way to obtain the information and unless the information is judged to be sufficiently important to justify the risk inherent in clandestine operations. One member of the group said that he had heard that clandestine reports constituted no more than 15% of all information gathered and were mostly worthless. Mr. Proctor said that those figures

were not valid because they would vary widely from country to country depending upon the type of society involved. He said that in open societies far less than 15% of the information received would be clandestinely collected whereas in closed societies it might be much higher.


Mr. Proctor was asked about his views of the allegations in the Pike Committee report regarding intelligence failures. In response, he explained that the basic purpose of intelligence is to inform policymakers of the forces at work abroad that could affect American interests. In all cases cited as "failures" by the Pike Committee, the Agency had instead done very well in informing policymakers of the dangers inherent in the situations. He explained some of the background of the failure to predict the initiation of hostilities in the Yom Kippur War, stressing that the situation had been relatively static between April 1973 and October of that year. Analysts had stated that no additional forces were necessary and that war could begin at any time with no warning. He also said that had they wished to do so, analysts could have called "Wolf" virtually every day. He pointed out that another sort of analytical "failure" happens when the warnings of intelligence are taken seriously and action is taken to avert the situation -- thus the predicted event never happens.

Mr. Proctor was asked about oversight of the Agency and the Intelligence Community, specifically in regard to S.400 now pending in the Senate. Mr. Proctor did not comment on the specifics of that bill, but instead urged that oversight of the Intelligence Community be handled by a joint committee or one committee in each House with exclusive jurisdiction.

In response to another question, Mr. Proctor said that morale had remained remarkably high during the 18 months of intensive investigation, although many people had had their self-image and self-esteem damaged. He also said that the quantity and quality of applicants for employment had never been higher.

Attached is a list of the members of the Advisory Board and Senior Staff of the Center for Defense Information who attended the meeting.

STATINTL


Office of the
Assistant to the Director

cc: DCI
DDI

Doris Z. Bato - Cos Cob, Connecticut.

Arthur D. Berliss, Jr. - Captain, USNR (Ret.); former Vice President, Allen-Hollander Company, New York, N.Y.

James R. Compton - President, J. R. Compton Development Company; President's Council, Experiment in International Living, Los Gatos, California.

Randolph P. Compton - Macon, Mo.

Col. James Donovan - USMC (Ret.), Author; former publisher, Journal of the Armed Forces. Research Scientist, Head of Public Relations, Engineering Experiment Station, Georgia Institute of Technology. (Accompanied by wife, Kay).

Leslie Dunbar - Lewisburg, W.Va.

Charles H. Dyson - Chairman of the Board, Dyson-Kissner Corporation, New York, New York

**Brigadier General Bertram K. Gorwitz - U. S. Army (Ret.),
Deputy Director, Center for Defense Information**

G. Sterling Grumman - G. S. Grumman and Associates, Inc.,
Members, New York Stock Exchange, Boston, Mass.

Harry Huger - Partner, Arnold and Porter; Chairman, Board of Trustees, United Mine Workers of America, Welfare & Retirement Fund, Washington, D. C.

David T. Johnson - Director of Research, Center for Defense Information.

Stefan H. Leader - Staff Associate, Center for Defense Information.

Stewart R. Mott - Philanthropist, New York, New York,
(Accompanied by Cherry Barnes and Anne Zill).

Nicholas Nyary - Budapest, Hungary.

Lawrence S. Phillips - President, Phillips-Van Heusen Corporation, New York, New York.

Rear Admiral Gene R. La Rocque - U. S. Navy (Ret.), Director,
Center for Defense Information.

Rudolph S. Rasin - President, The Rasin Corporation,
Chicago, Ill.

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Dr. Earl C. Ravenal - Former Director, Asian Division
(Systems Analysis), Office of Secretary of Defense.
Professor of American Foreign Policy, Johns Hopkins
School of Advance International Studies, Washington, DC
(Accompanied by wife, Carol M.).

John M. Rockwood - Publisher, Chicago, Ill. (Accompanied
by wife, Patricia Dean).

Robert P. Schauss - Metallurgical Engineer; International
Consultant for Industrial Development. River Forest, Ill.

Alfred P. Slaner - Chairman of the Executive Committee,
Kayser-Roth Corporation, New York, New York., (Accompanied
by wife, Luella B.).

Phillip S. Straus - Partner, Neuberger and Berman, Members,
New York Stock Exchange, New York, New York.

Susan W. Weyerhaeuser - New York, New York.

Col. Robert M. Whitaker - U.S. Air Force (Ret.), Staff
Associate, Center for Defense Information.

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